

# PLEN: Women and Congress

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Meet Izzy Haggard! Izzy double majors in public health and homeland security, and recently attended the Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN) seminar on Woman and Congress, thanks to a grant from Newcomb College Institute. Read about her experiences below:

Describe yourself and why you wanted to attend the PLEN seminar:

I'm a junior studying public health and homeland security. I am very passionate about public policy, specifically health care reform, but wasn't sure how that might fit into a career. I decided to attend PLEN so that I could learn about all of the careers available on Capitol Hill, what skills are required, and how I can accomplish

my goals. I wanted to meet women who have made it in a male dominated field and hear about their careers, life experiences, and how they find work-life balance.

What were your favorite parts of the conference?

I enjoyed the Networking 101 session on the first day. Networking and stepping outside your comfort zone can be very scary and it was a great way to prepare for a week full of meeting new and important women. I also enjoyed the Mentor Awards on Tuesday night. It was inspiring to see where some PLEN alumnae have ended up and I was lucky to meet some of the generous sponsors who make PLEN possible. Additionally, one of the award recipients, Courtney Liss, was a Tulane alum and it was wonderful to meet her.

Highlight a speaker or a job site you visited:

My favorite speaker was Congresswoman Jackie Speier of California who spoke at the Mentor Awards. Her story is so powerful and it really demonstrated that you can do whatever you want in life if you work hard for it. She shared some funny anecdotes and I was just in awe to be in the same room as her.

Detail what you learned that you hope to never forget:

I will never forget walking into the Capitol with my badge and being able to walk down hallways and into areas that I never would have seen if I were just a tourist. It was amazing to be in a building that has housed so many important moments in history.

Why should other students attend a PLEN conference?

PLEN is an amazing opportunity to learn about yourself, your interests, and your potential career. PLEN provides insightful and inspiring speakers and networking opportunities. Additionally, you can make some great friends from schools all across the country.

Does this sound like something you might be interested in? Tulane undergraduate students can apply to NCI for funding to attend PLEN conferences. Email Betsy Lopez at [elopez@tulane.edu](mailto:elopez@tulane.edu) for more information.

*Responses have been lightly edited for length and clarity.*